

Eureka – Land Usage
Zoning Regulations
Signs

§ 155.155 PURPOSES AND SCOPE.

In addition to the objectives listed in § 155.002, the specific purposes of sign regulations are to:

- (A) Provide each sign user an opportunity for effective identification by limiting the number and area of signs permitted on all sites.
- (B) Maintain and enhance the quality of the city's appearance by avoiding clutter and by implementing design review.
- (C) Enable users of goods and services to identify establishments offering services to meet their needs.
- (D) Regulate the number and size of signs according to standards consistent with the types of establishments in each zoning district.
- (E) Protect residential districts adjoining non-residential districts from adverse impacts of excessive numbers or sizes of signs.
- (F) Apply on a city-wide basis subject to other more restrictive regulations which may be applicable in the Redevelopment and Scenic Coastal Areas.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.156 DEFINITIONS.

For the purpose of this subchapter, the following definitions shall apply unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

AWNING SIGNS. Hoods or covers which project from a wall of a building and which are outdoor advertising signs which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services, whether located on-premise or off-premise from the property on which the signs are located.

COMMERCIAL SIGNS. An on- or off-premise sign that advertises or directs attention to uses, goods or services.

DIRECTLY ILLUMINATED SIGN. Any sign designed to provide artificial light either through exposed lighting on the sign face or through transparent or translucent material from a light source within the sign.

INDIRECTLY ILLUMINATED SIGN. Any sign designed to show an illuminated sign face by use of indirect illumination from exterior, non-exposed light sources aimed at the sign face or otherwise diffused to result in illumination which complies with § 155.161 of this subchapter.

INTERIOR PROPERTY LINE. A property line which separates adjoining properties and which is not adjoining any street, alley or public space.

INTERIOR SIGNS. Indoor advertising signs located within a building no nearer than one foot from a window, which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods and services whether located on or off-premise. *INTERIOR SIGNS* are exempt from these regulations per § 155.157(I) of this subchapter.

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OFF-PREMISE SIGNS. Outdoor advertising signs which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services not located, sold or available on the real property on which the signs are located. Billboards are off-premise signs.

ON-PREMISE SIGNS. Outdoor advertising signs which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services located entirely upon the real property of the occupant of the real property on which the signs are located.

ON-PREMISE FREESTANDING SIGNS. Outdoor advertising signs which are not attached or painted to the surface of a building, but which standing apart therefrom are intended to advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services located entirely upon the real property of the occupant of the real property on which the signs are located.

OFF-PREMISE FREESTANDING SIGNS. Outdoor advertising signs which are not attached or painted to the surface of an occupied building, but which standing apart therefrom are intended to advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services not located, sold or available on the real property on which the signs are located. Billboards may be off-premise freestanding signs.

PROJECTING SIGNS. Signs which project from a wall, eave or parapet, or the eave of a simulated mansard roof more than 12 inches from the face of the building; such signs are considered outdoor advertising signs which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services, whether located on-premise or off-premise from the property on which the signs are located.

TEMPORARY SIGNS. Signs displayed for a period not to exceed 100 days.

WALL SIGNS. Outdoor advertising signs attached or painted to the surface of a building which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services, whether located on-premise or off-premise from the real property on which the signs are located.

WINDOW SIGNS. Signs which are placed on the surface of or within one foot of a window for purposes of viewing outside the premises; such signs are considered outdoor advertising signs which advertise or direct attention to uses, goods or services, whether located on-premise or off-premise from the property on which the signs are located.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.157 EXEMPT SIGNS.

The following signs are exempt from the regulations of this subchapter:

(A) On-premise window signs expressing the name of the occupant. The total area of such window signs shall not exceed 10% of a window area.

(B) Street address numbers.

(C) Public information, identification, special event, and directional signs erected by a public agency.

(D) Names of buildings, dates of erection, commemorative tablets and the like, when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum, or other metal material and made a part of the structure. Such signs shall not exceed four square feet in area and shall not be illuminated.

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- (E) On-premise parking and other directional signs not exceeding four square feet.
- (F) Non-illuminated wall signs not over two square feet in area, displaying the name of the tenant or resident, the name of a home business approved pursuant to § 155.215 of this chapter, and/or the address at the entrance of each tenant space.
- (G) Signs manufactured as a standard, integral part of a mass-produced product accessory to a commercial or public or semipublic use, including but not limited to telephone booths, restrooms, vending machines, automated teller machines, gasoline pumps and other signs of an instructive nature or which include information required by county, state, or federal enforcement agencies.
- (H) Credit card, trading stamp, or trade association signs not exceeding one-half square foot each and which are attached flat to a glass surface.
- (I) On-premise signs within a building one foot or more from a window.
- (J) Holiday lights and displays not advertising a product or sale, erected no sooner than 45 calendar days before the holiday and removed within 14 calendar days following the holiday.
- (K) Temporary on-premise real estate or construction signs advertising property “For Sale,” “For Lease,” or “For Rent,” consistent with the restrictions contained in § 155.158 of this subchapter.
- (L) Signs used exclusively for the posting or display of official notices by a public agency or official, or by a person giving legal notice, and signs erected or maintained by a public agency or official or required by law to be maintained by a public utility for directional, warning, or informational purposes.
- (M) Temporary signs or displays of an emergency, patriotic, religious, or community nature, including temporary nonstructural posters for civic or political campaigns and religious symbols consistent with the restrictions contained in § 155.158(B)(4) of this subchapter.
- (N) One unlighted garage sale sign provided such sign shall not exceed four square feet in area and shall be displayed on the property where such sale shall take place and only on the day of said sale.
- (O) Temporary promotional signs for outdoor exhibitions or performances on the premises, and on- or off-premise signs advertising community events for a period not to exceed 30 consecutive days when erected no sooner than 30 days prior to the event and removed within ten days after the event.
- (P) Temporary signs in residentially zoned areas limited to 16 square feet which display non-commercial messages, but are otherwise not restricted in content.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.158 REGULATIONS FOR ON-PREMISE AND OFF-PREMISE SIGNS.

No sign, outdoor advertising structure, or display of any character shall be permitted except in conformity with the following additional regulations following the schedule or located elsewhere in this title.

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	NR; P (Natural Resource & Public)	RS (Single Family Residential)	RM (Multi-Family Residential)	OR; HM (Office Residential & Hospital Medical)	CN (Neighborhood Commercial)	CC; CW (Central Commercial & Commercial Waterfront)	CP (Planned Commercial)	CS; ML; MG (Service Commercial; Limited Industrial, & General Industrial)	Additional Regulations
On-premise wall signs	As prescribed by conditional use permit	1 sq. ft./1 foot of street frontage	Signs shall not project above the parapet or roof line	Signs shall not project above the parapet or roof line	Signs shall not project above the parapet or roof line	Signs shall not project above the parapet or roof line	Signs shall not project above the parapet or roof line	Signs shall not project above the parapet or roof line	§ 155.158 (B)(1),(5)-(7)
On-premise freestanding signs	As prescribed by conditional use permit		8 ft. max. ht.; 1/primary street entrance	12 ft. max. ht.; 1/street frontage	35 ft. max. ht.; 1/street frontage ¹	35 ft. max. ht.; 1/street frontage ¹	35 ft. max. ht.; 1/each 300 ft. street frontage ¹	35 ft. max. ht.; 1/street frontage ¹	§ 155.158 (B)(2), (5)-(7)
Total allowable on-premise sign area	As prescribed by conditional use permit		4 sq. ft. maximum	1 sq. ft./4 ft. of street frontage up to 300 sq. ft./sign	1 sq. ft./1 ft. of street frontage up to 300 sq. ft./sign	2 sq. ft./1 ft. of street frontage up to 300 sq. ft./sign	120 sq. ft./acre. of site in the use up to 300 sq. ft./sign	3 sq. ft./1 ft. of street frontage up to 300 sq. ft./sign	§ 155.158 (B)(7)
Temporary construction signs	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	32 sq. ft., max.; 1/st. frontage	
Temporary real estate or construction signs (on-premise)	16 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	6 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	12 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft., max.; 1/site	
Temporary political signs	16 sq. ft. maximum	16 sq. ft. maximum	16 sq. ft. max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft. maximum	16 sq. ft. max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft. max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft. max.; 1/site	16 sq. ft. max.; 1/site	§ 155.158 (B)(4)
Off-premise signs	§ 155.158 (B)(11)	§ 155.158 (B)(10)	§ 155.158 (B)(10)	§ 155.158 (B)(10), (11)	§ 155.158 (B)(11)	§ 155.158 (B)(11)	§ 155.158 (B)(11)	§ 155.158 (B)(11)	§ 155.158 (B)(4)
Illuminated signs									see § 155.161

¹ See also § 155.158 (A), (B)(2), and (B)(9)

(A) Additional sign regulations regarding sign height. Signs located in commercial districts adjacent to Broadway, south of Hawthorn Street and north of Highland Avenue and east of Broadway to the Bay, and bounded by Hawthorn Street and Highland Avenue are to have a maximum sign height of 30 feet.

(B) Additional sign regulations.

(1) Wall signs. A wall sign shall:

(a) Not project above an eave or parapet, including the eave of a simulated mansard roof.

(b) Not project more than 12 inches from the face of the building.

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(c) Wall signs on a window and interior signs within one foot of a window shall be deemed both wall and window signs. The total area of window signs shall not exceed 10% of ground floor window area.

(2) Freestanding signs. A freestanding sign shall:

(a) Not be closer than 30 feet to another freestanding sign or to a projecting sign.

(b) Not be closer to an interior property line than one-half its height.

(c) Not extend over a public right-of-way and not be located on the same frontage as a projecting sign extending over a public right-of-way.

(3) Real estate signs. A real estate sign on a residential site shall be limited to six square feet if displayed longer than three calendar days following issuance of a certificate of occupancy. All off-premise real estate signs shall:

(a) Not exceed three feet in height and four square feet in size.

(b) Be allowed to be placed behind the sidewalk, given that they are not located within the public right-of-way.

(c) Not be placed in the street medians and on the sidewalks.

(d) Be allowed only for development that lies within the city.

(4) Temporary political signs. Temporary political signs shall:

(a) Pertain to a candidate, ballot measure or issue to be voted upon within 90 calendar days of posting; and

(b) Be removed within ten calendar days following the election.

(c) Be no larger than 16 square feet (e.g., 4'x 4').

(d) Not be placed within the public right-of-way.

(e) Not be placed so as to obstruct a motorist's clear view of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, traffic-control signs or signals; impede a pedestrian's free use of the sidewalk; or otherwise represent a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

(5) Sign area design bonuses. A property owner or occupant may be allowed a bonus of 5% additional sign area (as measured in square feet) for signage per frontage foot of a property or occupant for each of the following factors when documented and requested at time of sign permit application:

(a) Painted signs;

(b) Signs attached to the business identified;

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- (c) Single-sided signs;
- (d) Signs displaying a name of business only;
- (e) Signs with three-dimensional lettering or elements;
- (f) Signs using gold-leaf of 14K or higher count;
- (g) Signs using neon tube illumination;
- (h) Signs using indirect illumination;
- (i) Signs incorporating analogous architectural elements;
- (j) Layout elements extending beyond the borders of the sign.

(6) No single-family permitted use shall be allowed signage except as specified in § 155.157 of this subchapter.

(7) All signs in the redevelopment areas shall be subject to site plan and architectural review in accordance with §§ 155.180 through 155.1897 of this chapter.

(8) One identification sign, not directly lighted, and not exceeding 40 square feet, shall be allowed on the site of public buildings or grounds, or a building occupied by a private non-profit organization. Any such building in excess of 10,000 square feet of floor area may be permitted to increase the sign area by 20 square feet for each 10,000 square feet of building area to a maximum of 150 square feet.

(9) Freestanding signs in the redevelopment areas shall have a maximum height of 24 feet.

(10) No new off-premise signs shall be located in residential zones.

(11) Square footage of off-premises signs shall be counted toward the allowed sign square footage of the property on which the sign is located.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94) Penalty, see § 150.999

§ 155.159 SIGNS AND SCENIC COASTAL AREAS.

No new off-premise advertising signs or billboards shall be located in scenic coastal resource areas designated in the LCP Land Use Plan. Existing signs in existing locations may be maintained, relocated, and repaired consistent with all other applicable sections of this code.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94) Penalty, see § 150.999

§ 155.160 MURALS, GRAPHIC DESIGNS AND THE LIKE.

Murals, large graphic designs and statuary shall be subject to review and approval by the Building Official for the sole purpose of insuring that construction of such displays will not pose a hazard to public health, safety or welfare. Murals, graphic designs and decorating of a building in the city's redevelopment area shall be subject to site plan and architectural review in accordance with §§ 155.180 through 155.187 of this chapter.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

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§ 155.161 ILLUMINATION; MOVEMENT.

(A) Any illuminated sign shall substantially comply with the average light levels recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA):

Light colors	Dark surroundings	20 footcandles
Dark colors	Dark surroundings	50 footcandles
Light colors	Bright surroundings	50 footcandles
Dark colors	Bright surroundings	100 footcandles

(1) Whenever illumination is in issue, the Director of Community Development may require submission for his review a computer lighting study by the manufacturer of all lamps used in the particular lighting application. The Director of Community Development may require that lamps in use produce average light levels which, in the opinion of the Director, substantially comply with the standards of the IESNA stated above, or as may be amended from time to time to reflect changes in the state of the art of illumination as approved by the IESNA.

(2) All indirectly illuminated light levels shall be measured in footcandles according to the standards of the IESNA as illuminance falling on the sign face and not as reflectance off the sign face. A sign owner must produce the requested computer lighting study within 30 days. If the study is not produced, the city may contract for the performance of a lighting study to establish the levels of illuminance falling on the particular sign face in issue and bill the sign or property owner (as appropriate) for the cost of the lighting study.

(B) Sign illumination shall be maintained constant in intensity, color, and pattern at all times when the sign is lighted. No sign illumination shall be of such brightness as to create annoying or hazardous glare or an annoying halo effect.

(C) No movement, or apparent movement of, or in, a sign or change in intensity of illumination of a sign shall be permitted where illumination exceeds 10 footcandles. A time or temperature sign or a theater canopy sign consistent with other regulations of this subchapter shall be permitted. Electronically controlled changeable text reader boards which change copy or design in time periods of less than five minutes shall not be permitted.

(D) Whenever the Director of Community Development may reasonably find that a particular lighting application is not in substantial compliance with the recommended light levels established by the IESNA as stated herein, then the Director of Community Development may proceed to abate the condition as a nuisance in accordance with the provisions of § 150.041(A)(4) of this title.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94) Penalty, see § 150.999

§ 155.162 PROHIBITED LOCATIONS; SIGN TYPES; MESSAGES.

(A) A sign in a required yard (setback area) adjoining a street property line shall comply with the requirements of §§ 71.55 through 71.59 of this code of ordinances.

(B) Except for exempt flags and banners pursuant to § 155.157(P), use of wind-blown or inflatable devices of any type is prohibited, including the production of smoke, bubbles, sound, or other substances.

(C) Other than when used for traffic direction, signs which contain or are in imitation of official traffic signs or signals are prohibited. No sign shall be erected in such a manner that its size, location, content, colors, or illumination shall interfere with, obstruct, confuse, or mislead traffic.

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(D) No sign shall contain statements, words, pictures, or other representations which are in reference to obscene matter which violate the Cal. Penal Code §§ 311 et seq.

(E) No permanent exterior signs shall be made of materials which are impermanent and will not stand exposure to weather.

(F) No sign shall be located within a public right-of-way unless an encroachment permit is obtained from the Director of Public Works.

(G) No sign shall be erected in such a manner that any portion of the sign or its support is attached to, or will interfere with, the free use of any fire escape, exit, or standpipe. No sign shall be erected which will obstruct any required stairway, door, ventilator, or window.

(H) Signs utilizing flashing lights, changing of color and intensity, or mechanical moving parts are prohibited, except as allowed in § 155.161(C) time and temperature devices and barber poles.

(I) Signs erected upon or extending above any part of a roof or false roof structure are prohibited.

(J) No vehicle may be used as a platform for a billboard whether on private property or within a public right-of-way.

(K) No banner sign shall be displayed for longer than 30 days. The area of any banner used shall be counted against the property owner's or occupant's limitation on square footage of signage.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94) Penalty, see § 150.999

§ 155.163 MAINTENANCE; RELOCATION; ABANDONMENT AND REMOVAL.

All signs shall be maintained in good repair and shall be cleaned, painted, or replaced as necessary to present a neat appearance. All signs and sign structures may be relocated on the premises where sited whenever desired to improve visibility, enhance safety, or extend the life and durability of the signs. An on- or off-premises sign, or the advertising copy shown thereon, advertising any uses, goods or services shall be removed within 120 calendar days following the actual discontinuance or unavailability of the uses, goods or services.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94) Penalty, see § 150.999

§ 155.164 NONCONFORMING SIGNS.

(A) All nonconforming signs and other sign structures which were erected and in existence prior to the effective date of the adoption of this subchapter and which were, at the time of such erection or establishment, in compliance with all then applicable statutes and ordinances, but which do not meet the requirements of this chapter, shall be permitted to remain in existence notwithstanding their nonconforming character.

(B) Any portion of a legal nonconforming sign which is damaged may be restored, repaired or completely replaced provided that its owner complies with each of the following:

- (1) The area of the sign face is not enlarged upon restoration, repair or replacement;
- (2) The restored, repaired or replaced sign face or sign structure remains on the same parcel of real property and faces the same general direction as the pre-existing sign;
- (3) The height of the sign face and structure is not raised; and,

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(4) The restoration, repair or replacement of the sign face or sign structure is completed within 360 days following the damaging of the sign face or sign structure. Upon good cause shown to the satisfaction of the public agency, it may grant additional time for completing restoration, repair or replacement of a damaged sign face or sign structure.

(C) Any legal nonconforming off-premise sign may be reconstructed or relocated by its owner upon the same parcel of real property provided that its owner complies with each of the following:

(1) The area of the sign face is not enlarged to greater than that of the sign it replaces;

(2) The sign face or sign structure faces the same general direction as the sign it replaces;

(3) The height of the sign face and structure is not raised above that of the sign it replaces; and,

(4) Any new location selected on the same parcel of real property otherwise complies with then current setback requirements for new signs within the applicable zoning.

(D) All non-conforming signs advertising a permanent use, goods, or services, shall be removed within 120 calendar days following the actual discontinuance, unavailability, or removal of such use, goods or services from business. Any property owner affected by this provision may apply to the Director of Community Development for an exemption based upon a claim that the subject sign has historical significance which is an integral part of the real property. The Director of Community Development shall make written findings to approve or deny the exemption request. The determination of the Director of Community Development may be appealed within 10 days to the Planning Commission. Any nonconforming sign fitting the description herein may be abated as a nuisance by action of the Director of Community Development in accordance with the provisions of § 150.041(A)(4) of this title.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.165 SIGN PERMITS.

(A) Permit required. A person shall, unless otherwise exempted by § 155.157 of this subchapter, be required to obtain a permit from the Department of Community Development prior to the placing or erecting of any signs. In most cases, a building permit and/or electrical permit shall also be required.

(B) Application for sign permits. Application for sign permits shall be made upon forms provided by the Director of Community Development and shall be accompanied by the following material:

(1) Two copies of a plan showing:

(a) Position of each sign and its relation to adjacent buildings, structures, or geologic features.

(b) The design (front, top and side views), size, and proposed location on the premises of such signs or sign structures.

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(c) If a sign application is to be subject to design review proceedings then also the proposed color indications.

(2) A statement showing the sizes and dimensions of all signs existing on the premises at the time of making such application. A current photograph depicting the premises shall be included.

(3) Such other information as the Director may reasonably require.

(4) Fees as adopted by Council resolution.

(C) Review of sign applications.

(1) Staff review. All signs which meet the limitations of this subchapter shall be reviewed by the Department of Community Development (except those listed in § 155.157 of this subchapter), unless review by the Design Review Committee as specified in §§ 155.180 through 155.187 of this chapter. The staff may approve, approve with modification, or deny any application subject to the criteria of subsection (3) of this division. Any staff decision may be appealed by the Design Review Committee.

(2) Design Review Committee review. When required to be reviewed by the Design Review Committee in accordance with §§ 155.180 through 155.187 of this chapter, the Design Review Committee shall approve, or shall submit a written report to the Planning Commission recommending conditional approval, modification, or disapproval in accordance with § 155.185 of this chapter. Any decision by the Design Review Committee relative to the review of signs may be appealed to the Planning Commission pursuant to §§ 155.180 through 155.187 of this chapter.

(3) Review criteria. The staff and/or Design Review Committee shall apply all of the following criteria as the basis for action:

(a) Whether the sign complies with the regulations contained in § 155.158 of this subchapter.

(b) Whether the sign is desirable for the applicant's enjoyment of substantial trade and property rights, and does the sign not constitute needless repetition, redundancy or proliferation of signing.

(c) Whether the sign is consistent with the purposes and scope of this subchapter as set forth in § 155.155 of this subchapter.

(d) Whether the sign does not constitute a detriment to public health, safety and welfare.

(e) The location and design of the proposed sign shall be considered in order to determine that the sign will not obscure from view or unduly detract from existing adjacent signs.

(f) The location and design of a proposed sign in a commercial or industrial district within 100 feet (excluding highway or road right-of-way) of a residential district shall be considered in order to determine that the sign shall not have a significant adverse effect on the character of the residential district.

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(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.166 COMPENSATION.

Whenever a duly permitted income producing off-premise sign is taken by power of eminent domain, or by a duly adopted ordinance having such effect, then the owner thereof shall be compensated by the payment of the fair market value thereof as determined by an independent appraisal using the income method. The compensation value of any other duly permitted sign shall be determined by an independent appraisal of the fair market value of such sign using generally accepted appraisal methods.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.167 COMPLIANCE WITH UNIFORM SIGN CODE.

It is the intent of this chapter to comply with the provisions of the Uniform Sign Code, as applicable.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)

§ 155.168 INVENTORY AND IDENTIFICATION OF ILLEGAL OR ABANDONED SIGNS.

Within six months of the adoption of this subchapter (the sign ordinance), the city shall in compliance with state law, commence an inventorying and identification of all illegal or abandoned advertising displays. The city shall commence abatement of illegal or abandoned signs within 60 days following the six-month period when inventorying and identification is to commence.

(Ord. 585-C.S., passed 12-20-94)